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ABSTRACT

A survey querying 3,978 public school principals and 320 superintendents about their attitudes towards inservice teacher education courses for credit produced varying results. While administrators as a whole exhibited positive feelings towards inservice programs, school principals tended to respond in favor of such courses to a significantly larger extent than did superintendents; school superintendents evinced a concern with the financial burden of such inservice courses. A copy of the instrument used is appended, as are sample comments from respondents. (LH)

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School Administrators' Perceptions of In-Service for Credit Courses

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to obtain school administrators' opinions of the approved in-service for credit courses. The courses are provided by local or IU in-service councils, approved by the Department of Education, and grant credit toward teacher certification.

The survey was mailed to all public school principals and superintendents in the spring of 1979. Three thousand, nine hundred seventy-eight principals (33 percent) and 320 superintendents (64 percent) returned completed questionnaires.

The results of the survey showed that administrators as a whole had very positive opinions of the approved in-service for credit courses. They felt that the courses made a unique and valuable contribution to the continuing professional growth of teachers and were more practical than college courses. They also felt that teacher involvement in the courses, the responsiveness of the courses to local needs, the low cost, the "hands on" experience and providing the courses locally were important elements of the program.

Comparison of the responses of superintendents and principals showed that the two groups had significantly different opinions on 22 of the 35 items on the opinionnaire. In each of these cases, principals were significantly more supportive of the courses than superintendents. However, the majority of each group was on opposite sides of the agree/disagree scale on only five items. These items showed that the majority of the principals felt that: 1) more approved in-service courses were needed, 2) the courses resulted in improved student achievement, 3) the courses were more likely than college courses to have impact in the classroom, 4) local districts should reimburse participants for the courses, and 5) discontinuing the courses would adversely affect their educational programs. Conversely, the majority of the superintendents disagreed with these opinions. Analysis within the groups, though, showed that finance was clearly an overriding concern of superintendents.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1972 the State Board of Education authorized that all or part of the educational requirements for the renewal of a provisional teaching certificate or the requirements for a permanent teaching certificate could be earned through in-service courses which were approved by the Department of Education. Prior to that time the requirements could be met only through college course work. The purpose of the program was to facilitate teacher certification and provide courses based on local needs. The courses are offered under the auspices of an in-service council, and approved by the Department of Education. The council may be established by a school district, an intermediate unit or a combination of the two. It must include representatives from the district's teacher organizations, administrators, students, school board, intermediate unit, institutions of higher learning and community and is responsible for appointing an in-service coordinator, conducting a continuing needs assessment, designing or commissioning in-service proposals and monitoring the program. There are presently 28 intermediate unit and 22 school districts in-service councils in the state. Since 1972 they have sponsored a total of over 5,000 courses and served more than 100,000 teachers.

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of this study was to obtain school administrators' perceptions of the approved in-service for credit courses as part of the Department's continuing program review. An earlier study, conducted in 1976, found that participants were highly supportive of the courses (Reardon, 1977).

Instrumentation

A questionnaire was developed to obtain school administrators' opinions of the approved in-service courses. The questions covered three areas: general perceptions of the courses, classroom impact and financial ramifications. Items were randomly ordered on the questionnaire sent to the administrators, but are shown by area in Appendix B. Information was also obtained about the respondents and, in the case of superintendents, about their districts (Appendix A).

The questionnaire was mailed to all public school principals and superintendents in the spring of 1979. Due to a low response rate, a follow-up postcard was sent to the principals two weeks after the initial mailing.

Sample Size

Three thousand nine hundred seventy-eight questionnaires were sent to principals and 504 to superintendents. Of these 1,322 principals (33 percent) and 320 superintendents (63 percent) returned completed questionnaires. The findings from these questionnaires are presented in the following sections of the report. Seventy-nine more principals and 11 superintendents returned the questionnaire and provided background information, but did not give their opinions of the PDE approved in-service for credit courses. These respondents are discussed separately from the others.

No Opinion Responses

In addition to "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree," the respondents were given the option of a "no opinion" response to each item so they would not have to express an opinion if they did not wish. Many respondents, though, noted that they used this option for "did not know." "No opinion" responses should thus be considered to mean either "no opinion" or "don't know."

As shown in Appendix B, only 3 percent of the respondents gave "no opinion" responses to item 30. This item asked if school districts have an obligation to support staff development activities and is a pure opinion question. In contrast, a high of 63 percent of the respondents gave "no opinion" responses when asked if in-service for credit courses had resulted in improved student achievement. Thus, it appears that the respondents gave extensive thought to their answers and expressed opinions only when they were sure of their feelings or facts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Characteristics of Respondents Who Answered the Opinionnaire

Superintendents

As seen in Appendix A, over half of the 320 superintendents who answered the questionnaire were from districts with 1,000 to 2,999 students and more than three out of four were from districts with 1,000 to 4,999 students. Most had been with their district more than five years and a superintendent more than five years. Fewer than one superintendent out of ten had been in his or her district a year or less, and only slightly more than one out of ten had been a superintendent one year or less. Thus, as a group, they were very knowledgeable about their districts and positions. The superintendents were also knowledgeable about the PDE in-service for credit courses; almost half reported they were very familiar with the courses, more than half were somewhat familiar with the courses, and only one out of 100 was not at all familiar with the program. Additionally, 15 percent had taken or taught one of the courses themselves.

The superintendents were also asked about the policies of their districts regarding approved in-service for credit courses. One out of 20 of the districts provided total released time for the courses and three out of 20 provided partial released time for the courses. The remaining 16 out of 20 districts provided no released time at all. There was more diversity in the policy on reimbursement of in-service costs: 35 percent of the districts did not reimburse teachers' costs, 33 percent reimbursed a set dollar amount, 19 percent provided complete reimbursement, and 12 percent provided a set percentage reimbursement per credit. Credits earned in PDE approved in-service courses do not count toward salary increments in slightly more than three out of ten districts, but did count in the other seven out of ten districts. Finally, 48 percent of the superintendents felt that the in-service for credit courses saved their districts money while 52 percent felt that this was not true. This is surprising since in-service for credit courses cost considerably less than college courses. Thus, a portion of the respondents clearly had something other than the comparative costs for tuition reimbursement in mind when they answered the question on whether or not the courses saved their district money.

Principals

Like the superintendents, the principals who completed the opinionnaire were an experienced group. Over half had been in their current position more than five years and three out of four had been a principal more than five years. Additionally, more than half had been in education over 20 years and more than three out of four had been in the field more than 10 years. In spite of their experience, however, principals were significantly less familiar with the PDE in-service for credit courses than the superintendents; only 19 percent were very familiar with the courses, 70 percent were somewhat familiar with the program and 11 percent knew nothing at all about it. Principals were significantly more likely than superintendents, though, to have taken or taught an approved in-service for credit course. Still, slightly fewer than one out of four principals had done so.

Over half of the principals were elementary principals, 23 percent were secondary principals, 16 percent were middle school or junior high principals and 3 percent reported they were responsible for two or more types of schools. Seven out of 10 had a masters degree, just under one out of 10 had a doctoral degree, and the remainder had a certificate of advanced study or reported two or more responses. The average principal reported that 15 percent of the teachers under his or her supervision had participated in at least one approved in-service for credit course during the past year. This figure varied by the type of school, however, with elementary principals reporting the most extensive participation in the courses (17 percent) and secondary principals reporting the least participation (9 percent).

Characteristics of Respondents Who Did Not Answer the Opinionnaire

The 11 superintendents who provided background information but did not give their opinions of the approved in-service for credit program differed from the superintendents who did answer the opinionnaire in that 1) they were less familiar with the courses and 2) a large proportion had neither taken nor taught one of the courses. The 79 principals who provided background information but did not give their opinions of the courses also differed from the principals who gave their opinions in the same ways. Additionally, none of the teachers under their supervision had taken an in-service for credit course during the past year. These findings are clearly consistent with the decision of these respondents not to answer the opinionnaire.

OPINIONNAIRE RESULTS

Total Group Responses

General Perceptions

Approval of in-service for credit courses by the Department of Education requires that teachers must be involved in the planning and evaluation of the courses. As seen in Appendix B, over half of the administrators agreed that this was an important feature of the courses and more than a third strongly agreed (item 1).[1] In contrast, only 7 out of 100 administrators disagreed that teacher involvement was an important feature of the courses and fewer than 2 out of 100 strongly disagreed that this was so. More than four out of five administrators felt that this involvement led to improved teacher morale and "commitment to the cause."

[1]Item numbers are shown in parentheses.

Approval of in-service for credit courses also requires that the courses must be based on a local needs assessment. Item 3 shows that almost 9 out of 10 administrators agreed or strongly agreed that the practice made the courses of particular importance to their teachers. The administrators as a whole also felt the courses were meeting the needs they perceived; 60 percent agreed that they were (4). In addition, almost 7 out of 10 respondents felt that when their district requested a particular in-service for credit course, it was almost always offered, but slightly more than 3 out of 10 felt that this was not true (5). Further, as seen in item 6, the majority of the administrators (52 percent) felt that the number of in-service for credit course offerings was sufficient to meet their needs but 48 percent felt that more courses were needed. In contrast to these responses, 92 percent of the administrators agreed or strongly agreed that in-service for credit courses could meet organizational as well as personal goals within their district (7). Thus, administrators view the in-service for credit courses as meeting most but not all of their local needs. Clearly, though, the courses are viewed by almost all of the administrators as providing a means to do so.

A major assumption on which the approved in-service program is based is that the courses are of particular relevance to teachers because they are practical rather than theoretical and provide "hands on experience." As shown in item 8, 7 out of 10 respondents agreed that this was true, 2 out of 10 strongly agreed and only 1 out of 10 administrators disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Another assumption is that providing the courses locally enables more teachers to obtain additional education than would otherwise be possible. Item 9 shows that more than 3 out of 4 administrators agreed that this was the case.

More than 7 out of 10 administrators felt that teachers who attend in-service for credit courses frequently share information, techniques and concepts with those who didn't attend, and 1 out of 10 administrators strongly agreed that this was true (10). Further, 9 out of 10 respondents felt that a major benefit of the courses was that they generate opportunities for idea exchange, "cross pollenation" and interaction among participants (11). Several respondents noted, however, that the same could be said of other courses.

Criticism of the PDE approved in-service for credit courses generally stems from the higher education community. However, 75 percent of the public administrators felt that the courses were not inferior to comparable college courses (12). In addition, almost 3 out of 4 respondents felt that colleges should not be the only providers of courses to meet permanent teacher certification (13) and an equal number felt that their teachers found in-service for credit courses more practical than regular college courses (14). An even greater percentage of the administrators (89 percent) felt that their teachers viewed the instructors in the in-service for credit program as very competent (15). Further, more than 4 out of 5 administrators felt that locally devised courses were more responsive to local organizational goals than most campus-based graduate programs (16). Just slightly more than 3 out of 10 administrators, though, said they would recommend that their teachers take in-service for credit courses rather than comparable college courses (17).

In 1977 Reardon reported that more than half of the participants in the in-service for credit program were permanently certified. Thus, credits earned in the courses would be irrelevant to them in terms of certification. In light of this finding, it is surprising that more than 4 out of 5 administrators felt that many teachers would not take approved in-service courses if credit toward certification was not awarded (18). However, a number of administrators commented that they were not in a position to know if this was true and that the item was more appropriate to ask of teachers than administrators.

Finally, the administrators were almost evenly divided on the effect discontinuing the in-service for credit courses would have on their school's programs. Fifty-one percent felt that discontinuing the courses would adversely affect their educational programs and 49 percent felt that discontinuing the courses would not adversely affect the programs (19).

Classroom Impact

The goal of teacher training is to produce positive change in teachers and their classrooms. The administrators felt that in-service for credit courses were contributing toward accomplishing this goal. Slightly more than 6 out of 10 respondents agreed that in-service for credit courses are a positive way to improve teacher competence and almost 3 out of 10 strongly agreed that this was so (20). In contrast, only 6 out of 100 administrators disagreed with the statement and only 3 out of 100 strongly disagreed. Further, 4 out of 5 administrators felt that the improvement in teacher competence was reflected in positive changes in the classrooms of teachers who had taken in-service for credit courses (21).

Six items on the questionnaire asked about specific kinds of change produced by participation in in-service for credit courses. Eighty-six percent of the administrators agreed or strongly agreed that the courses had helped their teachers adopt better teaching strategies (22); 93 percent felt that participation in the courses had increased teachers' knowledge of subject matter (23); 83 percent felt that the courses increased teacher interest (24); 60 percent felt that participation in the courses had improved classroom management (25); and 50 percent felt that student achievement in their school had improved as a result of participation in in-service for credit courses. Lastly, the majority of the administrators felt that in-service for credit courses were more likely than college courses to have an impact in the classrooms; 57 percent agreed that this was so (27).

Financial Ramifications

The cost per in-service credit ranges from no cost in some intermediate units to $25 in others. The average cost is $17. In contrast, an informal survey showed that the cost per graduate credit in Pennsylvania ranged from $51 to $205 in 1978. Thus, 69 percent of the administrators agreed that the cost of the in-service for credit courses made it possible for more teachers to obtain additional education and 13 percent strongly agreed that this was true (28). The remaining 19 percent who disagreed with the statement appear to be from districts which reimburse teachers for the full cost of both in-service and graduate credits, since that is the only circumstance when the statement would not be true. This inference is supported by the fact that 19 percent of the superintendents were from districts which provide complete reimbursement of in-service costs and thus in all probability also provide complete

reimbursement for graduate credits. The administrators also refuted the criticism that the only reason teachers prefer in-service for credit courses is that they are less expensive than college courses; 3 out of 4 administrators felt that this was not true, and only 1 out of 4 felt that it was (29).

The administrators overwhelmingly supported the concept that school districts have an obligation to support staff development activities which maintain or increase the professional competence of their teachers; 47 percent agreed that districts should and 48 percent strongly agreed that they should (30). More administrators thus strongly agreed with this item than with any of the others. Conversely, fewer respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement; only 5 percent, in fact, did so. Moreover, the administrators as a whole felt that districts should provide financial support for participation in in-service for credit courses almost 3 out of 5 administrators agreed or strongly agreed that school districts, because they derive benefits, should pay for in-service for credit courses. In addition, 44 percent of the respondents felt that in-service courses should be paid in the same way as are college courses and 23 percent strongly agreed that this should be so (32).

Administrators were also asked their opinions of counting in-service for credit courses toward salary increments. They strongly supported this policy; almost 4 out of 5 administrators felt that the courses should count toward salary increments, and only 1 out of 5 felt that salary increments should be granted for college courses but not for in-service for credit courses (34). Thus, as a whole, the administrators appear to feel that there should be no distinction between college courses and approved in-service for credit courses with regard to salary increments.

In light of the preceeding findings, it seems incongruous that 44 percent of the administrators felt that many of their teachers take approved in-service for credit courses simply because the credits count toward salary increments and 16 percent strongly agreed with the statement (35). Presumably though this is because, as one administrator commented, "I feel that many teachers do take the courses just because they count toward salary increments; and I also know that many don't."

Comparison of the Responses of Superintendents and Principals

In addition to looking at the responses of the administrators as a whole, the data were analyzed to see if there were differences between superintendents and principals. This analysis showed that there were significant differences[1] in the responses of the two groups to 22 of the 35 items. Closer examination showed that in each of these cases principals were significantly more supportive of the in-service for credit courses than superintendents. In other words, principals were more likely than superintendents to agree with statements that were positive toward the approved in-service for credit program. They were also more likely to strongly agree than agree. This trend was reversed when the statement was not supportive of the in-service for credit program. On 17 of these 22 items, though, the majority of both groups of administrators were still on the same side of the agree/disagree scale. On the remaining five items one group as a whole agree with the item while the majority disagreed. These items and the distribution of responses are shown in

[1]Differences that would occur by chance only five or fewer times in a hundred such surveys as measured by the Chi-Square test of significance.

Table I. In all five cases the majority of the principals supported the in-service for credit courses while the majority of the superintendents did not. These items thus highlight support of the courses by principals and areas where the two groups of administrators disagreed in their responses.

Table I

Items on Which the Majority of the Principals
Disagreed With the Majority of the Superintendents

Item No.		Respondent Category	Agree or Strongly Agree %	Disagree or Strongly Disagree %
6.	The present number of in-service for credit course offerings is not adequate to meet our local needs.	T[a]	48.0	52.0
		S[b]	34.6	65.4
		P[c]	51.8	48.2
19.	Discontinuing the in-service for credit program would not adversely affect our educational program.	T	48.7	51.3
		S	60.4	39.6
		P	45.5	54.5
26.	Student achievement in our school has improved as a result of in-service for credit courses.	T	50.5	49.5
		S	37.2	62.8
		P	54.3	45.7
27.	In-service for credit courses are more likely than college courses to have impact in the classroom.	T	57.0	43.0
		S	47.2	52.8
		P	59.5	40.5
31.	Local districts, because they derive benefits, should pay for in-service for credit courses.	T	58.3	41.7
		S	37.0	63.6
		P	63.0	36.4

[a]Total Group
[b]Superintendents
[c]Principals

Appendix B also shows that there were significant differences in the distribution of no opinion responses on 13 of the 35 items. In these cases principals tended to give no opinion responses while superintendents were more likely to give an opinion.

Subgroup Analysis[1]

In addition to analyzing the data for the total group of administrators and comparing the responses of principals and superintendents, the responses were analyzed by subgroups to more fully understand the results of the survey and identify variables related to opinions of the approved in-service for credit courses. The results of this analysis for the two groups of administrators follows.

[1]Subgroups are identified in Appendix A.

Principals[1]

Type School

There were significant differences in the responses of principals from different schools to 19 of the 35 items. The pattern on these items was that elementary principals tended to be the most supportive of the in-service for credit courses and secondary principals tended to be the least supportive. It appears that this trend is related to the proportion of teachers participating in the program, since elementary principals had the greatest proportion of their teachers participating in the program and secondary principals had the lowest rate of participation in the courses. There were two exceptions to this pattern; secondary principals tended to feel that their teachers would participate in the courses even if credit toward certification was not granted (23), and that the number of in-service course offerings was not adequate to meet their local needs.

Degree

There were no significant differences in the responses of principals with different types of degrees to 25 of the 35 items on the opinionnaire. On the remaining 10 items, principals with doctoral degrees tended to be least supportive of the in-service for credit courses. Conversely, they were most supportive of college courses.

Experience in Position

Principals who had been in their current position one year or less, 2 to 5 years and more than 5 years gave similar responses to 29 items. On the remaining 6 items principals who had been in their position longest tended to give the most favorable responses.

Experience as a Principal

Only three differences were found among those who had been principals 1 year or less, 2 to 5 years and 5 years or more. Here again those with the longest tenure in their positions gave the most favorable responses.

Experience in Education

Principals who had been in education 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20, 21 to 30 and 31 or more years differed in their responses to only 5 items. Further, there was no pattern among these items.

Familiarity with the Courses

Principals who were very familiar, somewhat familiar and not at all familiar with the in-service for credit courses differed in their responses to 16 of 35 items. Significant differences between the proportion of those agreeing and disagreeing as well as among the 4 response choices were found for only 4 items though. This indicates that the remaining 12 differences were in the strength of the response. In most of these cases, those who were very familiar with the courses tended to be more supportive of the program than those who were not. Principals who were most familiar with the courses, though, were more likely than those who were not to feel that the number of in-service course offerings was adequate (6).

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[1]See Appendix C for the summary of significant differences between principals.

Taken or Taught

Principals who had taken one of the in-service for credit courses differed in their responses from those who had not on 24 of the 35 items. In all of these cases principals who had taken or taught one of the courses were more supportive of the program than those who had not done so. The biggest difference was on item 26; almost 7 out of 10 principals who had taken or taught one of the courses felt that the courses had improved student achievement while fewer than half of those who had participated in a course themselves agreed that this was true. Participation in the courses was thus clearly the respondent variable most related to principals' opinions of the in-service for credit courses.

Superintendents[1]

Size District

Superintendents from different size school districts had similar opinions on 29 of the 35 items on the opinionnaire. On three items there was a significant difference in the proportion of superintendents from different size districts who agreed or disagreed, but the difference on the remaining three items was only in the strength of agreement or disagreement. Moreover, there was no pattern of responses among these six items. It, thus, appears that superintendents from the six sizes of school districts included in the analysis have similar overall opinions of the in-service for credit courses.

Experience as Superintendent

Superintendents who had been in their positions less than 1 year, 1 to 5 years and 5 years or more differed in their responses on only 3 of 35 items. Further, there was no pattern in the responses on these three items. Thus, administrators with varying lengths of experience as superintendents appear to have similar overall opinions of the in-service for credit courses.

Experience in District

Superintendents who had been in their districts 1 year or less, 1 to 5 years and 5 years or more differed in their responses on only 2 of the 35 items. Again, no discernible patterns were found among the subgroups on these two items. Thus, superintendents with varying lengths of experience in their districts appear to have similar overall opinions of the in-service for credit courses. It is of particular interest, though, to note that superintendents who had been in their districts five or more years tended to feel that student achievement had improved as a result of in-service for credit courses more than superintendents who had less experience in their district did (26).

Degree of Familiarity with the In-Service for Credit Courses

Superintendents who were very familiar, somewhat familiar and not at all familiar with the in-service for credit courses differed in their responses on nine of the 35 items. Two of these differences were between the proportion of the groups agreeing and disagreeing, while on seven of the items the differences were in the

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[1]See Appendix D for a summary of significant differences between subgroups of superintendents.

strength of agreement or disagreement. In these cases superintendents who were more familiar with the in-service for credit courses tended to be more supportive of the program than those who were less familiar with it. The greatest difference in opinion was on classroom management; three out of five superintendents who were very familiar with the courses felt they contributed to better classroom management, while none of those who knew nothing about the courses felt that this was true (25).

Taken or Taught

Superintendents who had taken or taught one or more of the in-service for credit courses differed in their responses from those who had not on 18 items. In all of these cases superintendents who had taken or taught one of the courses were more supportive of the program than those who had not. Again, the greatest difference was on classroom management: only 47 percent of the superintendents who had not taken or taught one of the PDE approved in-service courses felt that classroom management in their district had improved because of the courses, but 77 percent of the superintendents who had taken or taught one of the courses felt classroom management had improved (25).

Released Time Policy

Superintendents who were from districts which provide complete released time for courses, partial released time and no released time differed in their responses on seven items. In all but two of these cases, superintendents from districts which provided complete released time tended to be most supportive of the in-service for credit courses, while those from districts which provided no released time tended to be least supportive. On two items, though, 9 and 25, superintendents who were from districts which provided partial released time were the most supportive of the program.

Reimbursement Policy

Analysis by the districts' reimbursement policy for in-service for credit costs showed significant differences in the responses to 13 items. In eight of these cases, superintendents from districts which provided reimbursement for in-service costs tended to give more favorable responses than the other groups. For the remaining five items there was no noticeable pattern of responses.

Salary Increment Policy

Examination of the data by the district's policy on salary increments showed significant differences in the responses to 14 items. In 12 of these cases superintendents from districts which counted the in-service credits toward salary increments were more supportive of the in-service for credit courses than those from districts which did not. This pattern was reversed on two items; superintendents from districts which did not count in-service for credit courses toward salary increments were significantly more likely to feel that their teachers found the courses more practical than regular college courses and less likely to feel that salary increments should be granted for college courses but not for in-service courses (14, 15).

Saves District Money

Superintendents who felt that the in-service for credit courses saved their district money differed in their responses from those who did not feel this way on most of the items on the questionnaire. In fact, differences were found on 24 of the

35 items. On all of these items superintendents from districts who felt the in-service for credit courses saved their district money were more supportive of the program than those who did not. Of particular note was that more than 3 out of 5 superintendents who felt that the courses saved their district money also felt that participation in the courses resulted in better classroom management while less than 2 out of 5 superintendents who felt that the courses did not save their district money agreed that this was true (25). Similarly, more than half the former group felt that participation in the courses had resulted in improved student achievement while just over a quarter of the latter group concurred (26). The superintendents' perception of whether or not the in-service for credit courses saved their district money was thus the respondent variable most closely related to their opinion of the in-service for credit courses.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The data presented in this report are apparently valid; respondents gave careful thought to their answers and gave opinions only when they were sure of their feelings or facts. However, it cannot be determined if administrators who did not respond to the survey differ from those who did. The data should thus be understood to represent only these respondents rather than all administrators.

The administrators were very positive toward the approved in-service for credit courses which are offered under the auspices of a local or IU in-service council. They perceive the courses as making a unique and valuable contribution to the continuing professional growth of teachers. Teacher involvement in the courses, the responsiveness of the courses to local needs, low cost, the practical nature of the courses and local provision of the courses were all seen as important elements of the program. The administrators also felt that the courses compared favorably with college courses. In fact, the in-service for credit courses were viewed as more practical than college courses. Administrators seemed to feel, though, that the two types of courses should be complementary rather than competitive programs. The administrators also felt the in-service courses should be treated the same as college courses with regard to salary increments and teacher reimbursement. There appears, though, to be some unmet need for approved in-service courses; 49 percent of the respondents felt that the present number of course offerings was not sufficient to meet their local need. This need appeared to be in areas where the courses were not presently being offered and at the secondary level. In spite of the positive opinions about the courses, 49 percent of the administrators felt that discontinuing the program would not adversely affect their educational program. However, in light of the other data, this appears to represent a neutral opinion rather than a negative view of the courses. Further, it is a view that was most likely to be held by people who were least familiar with the courses or felt that the courses cost their district money.

Principals and superintendents had significantly different opinions on 22 of the 35 items on the opinionnaire. In each of these cases principals were more supportive of the approved in-service for credit courses. Superintendents, though, were more likely than principals to express opinions on 14 items. It appears that this may be because principals as a whole were less familiar with the courses but closer to their operation and hence more supportive of them. There also seem to be financial implications which are related to superintendents' opinions. The majority of both groups of administrators were on opposite sides of the agree/disagree scale on only five items though. These items showed that the majority of the principals felt that: 1) more approved in-service courses were needed, 2) the courses resulted in improved

student achievement, 3) the courses were more likely than college courses to have impact in the classroom, 4) local districts should reimburse participants for the courses, and 5) discontinuing the courses would adversely affect their educational programs. Conversely, the majority of the superintendents disagreed with these opinions.

Analysis within the two groups of administrators showed that there were few differences in the responses based on years of experience. However, opinions of the courses were closely related to how familiar the respondents were with the approved in-service for credit courses and whether they had taken or taught one of the courses themselves. Administrators who had taken or taught one of the courses were consistently more supportive of the program than those who had not. Similarly, those who were most familiar with the program had a better opinion of it than those who were less familiar with it. The type of school a principal was from was also closely related to opinion of the program; elementary principals were most supportive of the courses. Presumably this was because elementary principals had the largest proportion of their teachers involved in the courses. Type of school thus appears to be a stand-in for involvement with the program. Also, the districts' policies on released time, reimbursement and salary increments were related to superintendents' opinions of the courses. The superintendents' view of whether the in-service for credit courses saved their district money, though, was most closely related to their opinions of the courses; superintendents who felt the courses saved their district money had significantly different responses than those who did not feel this way on 24 of 35 items. Finance is thus clearly an overriding concern of superintendents.

As a result of working with the survey these additional conclusions seem warranted:

1. Although many administrators are quite familiar with the approved in-service for credit courses, there are still some who know nothing about the program. This seems to be particularly true of principals. Further, there is some evidence that the low response rate of this group of administrators may be related to their lack of knowledge about the program.

2. Information was not collected on the location of the district or school. The comments indicate, though, that PDE approved in-service for credit courses are of particular importance in the rural areas of the state. As one principal commented these were the only courses available to the teachers within a 1 to 1½ hour driving radius.

3. The success of the approved in-service courses depends to a large extent on the local or IU implementation and administration of the program. Thus, the courses are very successful in some districts and IUs but less so in others.

4. The in-service courses are a viable method for school districts and buildings to effectively meet their needs.

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND THEIR DISTRICTS

1. Size of your district (pupils):

   3.8% Less than 1,000 — 28.3% 3,000-4,999 — 4.7% 10,000-15,000
   52.5% 1,000-2,999 — 9.7% 5,000-9,999 — 0.9% More than 15,000

2. Number of years in current district:

   8.5% 1 or less — 28.9% 2-5 years — 62.6% More than 5 years

3. Number of years as superintendent:

   12.1% 1 or less — 28.3% 2-5 years — 59.7% More than 5 years

4. How familiar are you with PDE's in-service for credit courses?

   44.5% Very familiar — 54.2% Somewhat familiar — 1.3% Not familiar at all

5. Have you taken or taught a course for PDE in-service credit? 14.5% Yes — 85.5% No

6. Which does your district provide?

   5.4% Total released time for an entire course
   11.9% Partial released time for an entire course
   82.7% No released time at all

7. How does your district reimburse teachers for in-service costs?

   18.8% Complete reimbursement
   32.6% A set reimbursement in dollars
   12.6% A set percentage reimbursement per credit
   35.5% No reimbursement of teachers' costs

8. Do credits earned in PDE approved in-service courses count toward salary increments in your district?

   69.0% Yes — 31.0% No

9. Do the in-service for credit courses save money for your district?

   47.8% Yes — 52.2% No

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF PRINCIPALS

1. Type of School: 58.0% Elementary — 23.4% Secondary
   15.8% Middle or Junior High — 2.8% Two or more responses

2. Highest degree attained: 8.8% Doctorate — 7.6% Other (certificate of advanced study, etc.)
   70.8% Masters — 12.8% 2 or more responses

3. Number of years in current position:

   9.0% 1 year or less — 25.3% 2-5 years — 65.7% More than 5 years

4. Number of years as principal:

   5.0% 1 year or less — 20.3% 2-5 years — 74.7% More than 5 years

5. Number of years in education:

   0.1% 1-5 — 6.5% 6-10 — 38.1% 11-20 — 43.4% 21-30 — 11.9% 31 or more

6. How familiar are you with PDE's in-service for credit courses?

   19.0% Very familiar — 70.0% Somewhat familiar — 11.0% Know nothing about it

7. Have you taken or taught an in-service for credit course? 23.4% Yes — 76.6% No

8. Percent of teachers supervised who have taken at least one in-service for credit course during the current school year:

   17.3% Elementary — 12.3% Jr. high or middle — 9.4% Secondary — 15.0% Total

APPENDIX B

OPINIONNAIRE

Response Options: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = No Opinion

General Perceptions		1[a] (%)	2[a] (%)	3[a] (%)	4[a] (%)	5[b] (%)
1. Teacher involvement in the planning and evaluation of in-service for credit courses is an important feature of the program.	T[c]*	33.7	57.1	7.3	1.9	15.4
	S[d]	27.2	62.7	6.8	3.3	11.4
	P[e]	35.3	55.7	7.4	1.6	[illegible]4
2. Teacher morale and "commitment to the cause" are improved because teachers can participate in the development and evaluation of in-service for credit courses.	T	14.8	67.5	14.8	2.9	19.2
	S	11.7	62.4	21.6	4.3	19.3
	P***	15.6	68.8	13.2	2.4	19.3
3. Since in-service for credit courses are based on local needs assessment, they are important to our teachers.	T	12.5	76.9	8.5	2.1	18.6
	S	8.5	76.9	11.5	3.1	17.2
	P***	13.5	76.9	7.8	1.8	18.9
4. The in-service for credit courses available to teachers in this school or district have addressed the needs I perceive.	T*	4.1	58.2	30.8	6.9	29.5
	S	2.0	61.3	29.3	7.4	19.5
	P	4.7	57.3	31.2	6.8	32.0
5. When our school system requests a particular in-service for credit course, it is almost always offered by a local in-service council.	T*	5.2	61.6	27.4	5.8	41.5
	S**	4.3	69.2	21.8	4.7	25.2
	P	5.7	59.0	29.2	6.1	45.6
6. The present number of in-service for credit course offerings is not adequate to meet our local needs.	T*	11.7	36.2	44.3	7.8	27.9
	S	5.8	28.8	55.0	10.4	18.2
	P***	13.5	38.4	41.2	6.9	30.3
7. In-service for credit courses can meet organizational as well as personal needs within this district.	T	14.4	78.1	6.0	1.5	8.3
	S	9.2	79.6	8.5	2.7	7.0
	P***	15.7	77.8	5.3	1.2	8.6
8. Teachers find in-service for credit courses useful because of the "hands on" experiences they provide.	T	20.5	68.9	8.7	1.9	21.3
	S	10.6	75.3	12.5	1.6	19.0
	P***	23.0	67.3	7.7	2.0	21.9
9 Since in-service for credit courses are provided locally, more of our teachers can obtain additional education than would otherwise be possible.	T	15.8	63.7	17.1	3.4	10.7
	S	9.8	59.8	24.8	5.6	9.5
	P***	17.3	64.7	15.1	2.9	11.1
10. Teachers who attend in-service for credit courses frequently share information techniques and concepts with those who didn't attend.	T	10.4	71.0	15.3	3.3	23.8
	S	6.3	71.4	17.6	4.7	24.9
	P	11.3	70.9	14.8	3.0	23.5
11. A major benefit of in-service for credit courses is that they generate opportunities for idea exchange, "cross pollenation" and interaction among participants.	T	21.4	70.1	6.9	1.6	13.3
	S	13.8	73.2	10.0	3.0	14.1
	P***	23.2	69.3	6.2	1.3	13.2
12. In-service for credit courses are inferior to comparable college courses.	T*	7.7	16.9	52.2	23.2	21.3
	S**	12.7	20.4	47.3	19.6	16.9
	P	6.5	16.0	53.4	24.1	22.4
13. Only colleges should provide courses to meet permanent teacher certification.	T*	11.8	14.0	47.4	26.8	6.6
	S	15.7	13.5	44.6	26.2	3.8
	P	10.8	14.1	48.1	27.0	7.3
14. Our teachers find in-service for credit courses are more practical than regular college courses.	T	11.0	63.2	22.4	3.4	35.0
	S	6.3	65.9	23.4	4.4	35.3
	P	12.1	62.5	22.3	3.1	34.9
15. Our teachers view the instructors in the in-service for credit program as very competent.	T*	9.4	76.5	12.8	1.3	31.7
	S	5.9	78.1	13.9	2.1	25.5
	P	10.5	76.0	12.5	1.0	33.3
16. Locally devised courses, designed to meet local needs, are more responsive to local organizational goals than most campus-based graduate programs.	T	22.4	61.3	13.1	3.2	10.9
	S	21.7	60.1	13.9	4.3	10.5
	P	22.6	61.6	12.9	2.9	11.0
17. I would recommend that our teachers take in-service for credit courses rather than comparable college courses	T	5.0	27.7	47.8	19.5	26.4
	S	1.3	19.7	46.4	32.6	27.0
	P***	5.9	29.7	48.2	16.2	26.3
18. Many teachers would not take approved in-service for credit courses if credit toward certification was not awarded.	T	24.2	56.6	16.4	2.8	10.0
	S	27.6	55.9	12.4	4.1	9.1
	P	23.4	56.7	17.4	2.5	10.3
19. Discontinuing the in-service for credit program would not adversely affect our educational program.	T*	10.2	38.5	38.3	13.0	16.6
	S**	15.3	45.1	28.1	11.5	9.4
	P	8.8	36.7	41.1	13.4	18.4

APPENDIX B (Continued)

		1[a] (%)	2[a] (%)	3[a] (%)	4[a] (%)	5[b] (%)
Classroom Impact						
20. In-service for credit courses are a positive way to improve teacher competence.	T	23.2	63.4	5.6	2.8	6.4
	S	16.3	71.2	7.8	4.7	6.6
	P***	31.1	61.4	5.1	2.4	6.4
21. Positive changes have occurred in the classrooms of those teachers in my school who have taken in-service for credit courses.	T	9.3	70.3	16.7	3.7	38.0
	S	4.9	66.5	24.2	4.4	34.8
	P***	10.6	71.3	14.7	3.4	38.8
22. In-service for credit courses have helped our teachers adopt better teaching strategies.	T*	14.5	72.0	10.0	3.5	26.0
	S	13.5	70.0	11.9	4.6	18.5
	P	14.8	72.6	9.5	3.1	27.8
23. When designed to do so, in-service for credit courses increase teachers' knowledge of subject matter.	T	17.6	75.3	5.6	1.5	11.7
	S	13.6	77.6	7.7	1.1	13.9
	P	18.6	74.7	5.2	1.5	11.2
24. After taking in-service for credit courses, teachers have shown increased interest in the topics covered.	T	8.5	74.3	14.5	2.7	31.0
	S	4.9	69.4	20.4	5.3	28.6
	P***	9.4	75.6	13.0	2.0	31.7
25. Classroom management in our school or district has improved as a result of in-service for credit courses.	T*	3.2	57.2	32.2	7.4	52.6
	S	2.3	49.7	40.7	7.3	43.8
	P***	3.4	59.5	29.6	7.5	54.8
26. Student achievement in our school or district has improved as a result of in-service for credit courses.	T	4.1	46.4	39.4	10.1	63.0
	S	3.9	33.3	48.1	14.7	59.2
	P***	4.2	50.1	36.9	8.8	64.0
27. In-service for credit courses are more likely than college courses to have an impact in the classroom.	T	11.0	46.0	35.7	7.3	24.7
	S	4.4	42.7	42.0	10.9	21.8
	P***	12.7	46.9	34.1	6.3	25.4
Financial Ramifications						
28. The lower cost of in-service for credit courses enables more teachers than would otherwise be possible to obtain additional education.	T	13.2	68.2	15.3	3.3	11.5
	S	8.9	60.2	23.8	7.1	11.4
	P***	14.3	70.1	13.2	2.4	11.6
29. The only reason teachers prefer in-service for credit courses is that they are less expensive than college courses.	T*	5.9	19.4	61.0	13.7	23.5
	S	6.1	19.5	61.9	12.5	19.2
	P	5.9	19.3	60.8	14.0	24.5
30. School districts have an obligation to support staff development activities which will maintain or increase the professional competence of their teachers.	T	47.8	47.0	3.1	2.1	2.6
	S	42.6	50.0	4.5	2.9	2.8
	P	49.1	46.3	2.7	1.9	2.5
31 Local districts, because they derive benefits, should pay for in-service for credit courses.	T	14.7	43.6	25.3	16.4	12.6
	S	3.9	33.1	32.4	30.6	9.8
	P***	17.4	46.2	23.5	12.9	13.2
32. In-service for credit courses should be paid for by the school district in the same way as are college courses.	T*	23.4	44.3	16.7	15.6	10.0
	S	8.7	41.3	20.1	29.9	5.4
	P***	27.3	45.0	15.8	11.9	11.1
33. In-service for credit courses should be acceptable toward salary increments.	T*	17.5	60.0	12.7	9.8	8.5
	S	7.7	48.8	21.1	22.4	5.4
	P***	20.0	62.9	10.6	6.5	9.3
34. Salary increments should be granted for college courses but not for in-service for credit courses.	T	7.6	13.2	50.1	29.1	12.3
	S**	12.9	17.4	48.1	21.6	9.2
	P	6.3	12.1	50.7	30.9	13.0
35. Many of our teachers take approved in-service for credit courses simply because the credits count toward salary increments.	T*	15.5	43.8	30.5	10.2	20.0
	S	18.2	36.1	31.8	13.9	11.7
	P	14.8	45.9	30.1	9.2	22.0

[a]Percent of respondents who expressed an opinion.

[b]Percent of respondents.

[c]Total group of administrators.

[d]Superintendents.

[e]Principals.

*Superintendents significantly more likely to give an opinion than principals as determined by Chi-square analysis (significant at the .05 level and beyond.)

**Superintendents significantly more likely than principals to agree or strongly agree.

***Principals significantly more likely than superintendents to agree or strongly agree.

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SUBGROUPS OF PRINCIPALS

Items	Subgroups of Principals[a]						
	Type of School	Degree	Experience in Position	Experience as Principal	Experience in Education	Familiarity With Service	Taken or Taught
General Perceptions							
1	-	-	S[b,c]	S[b,c]	-	-	-
2	S[c]	-	S[c]	-	-	-	S[c]
3	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]	S[c]
4	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]	S[c]
5	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]	-
6	S[b,c]	-	-	S[b]	-	S[b,c]	S[c]
7	S[b,c]	-	-	-	S[c]	S[c]	S[b,c]
8	S[c]	-	-	-	-	S[c]	S[b,c]
9	-	S[b]	-	-	-	S[c]	S[b,c]
10	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]
11	-	-	-	-	S[c]	-	
12	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	S[c]	S[b,c]
13	-	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-
14	-	-	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
15	-	-	S[b]	-	-	-	S[b,c]
16	S[c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]
17	-	S[c]	S[c]	S[b]	S[b]	-	S[b]
18	S[b]	S[b]	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
19	-	-	-	-	S[b]	S[b,c]	S[b,c]
Classroom Impact							
20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	S[c]	S[b,c]
22	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]	S[b,c]
23	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
24	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
25	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
26	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[b,c]
27	S[b,c]	S[b,c]	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-
Financial Ramifications							
28	-	S[c]	-	-	-	-	S[c]
29	S[b,c]	-	-	-	-	-	S[b]
30	-	S[c]	-	-	-	-	-
31	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]	-
32	-	-	-	-	-	S[c]	S[c]
33	S[c]	S[c]	-	-	-	S[c]	-
34	-	S[c]	-	-	-	S[c]	-
35	S[b,c]	S[c]	S[b]	-	S[c]	-	-

[a] Subgroups are identified in Appendix A.

[b] Significant difference at the .05 level or beyond in the proportion of respondents who agree and disagree.

[c] Significant difference at the .05 level or beyond among the four response choices.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SUBGROUPS OF SUPERINTENDENTS

Item	Subgroups[a] Size of District	Experience as Superintendent	Experience in District	Familiarity With Service	Taken or Taught Released Time Policy	Reimbursement Policy	Salary Increment Policy	Saves District Money
General Perceptions								
1	-	^{c}	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	-	-	-	-	^{c}	-	^{c}	-
3	^{c}	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}
4	-	-	-	-	^{c}	^{b,c}	^{b}	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{b,c}
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
9	^{c}	-	^{b}	-	-	^{b,c}	-	^{b,c}
10	^{c}	-	-	-	^{b}	^{c}	-	-
11	-	-	-	^{c}	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}
12	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
13	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b}	^{b,c}
14	-	-	-	-	^{b}	-	-	^{b,c}
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{b}	^{b}
16	-	-	-	^{c}	^{c}	-	-	-
17	^{b}	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	^{b,c}	^{c}	-	-	^{b}	-	^{c}	^{b,c}
19	-	-	-	^{b,c}	-	-	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
Classroom Impact								
20	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{c}	^{b,c}
21	-	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}
22	^{b,c}	-	-	^{c}	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}
23	-	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	-
24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{b,c}
25	-	-	-	^{b}	^{b,c}	^{b}	^{b}	^{b,c}
26	-	-	^{b}	-	^{c}	^{b,c}	-	^{b,c}
27	-	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b} -
Financial Ramifications								
28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{c}	^{b,c}
30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	^{b,c}
31	-	-	-	-	^{c}	^{b,c}	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
32	-	-	-	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
33	-	-	-	^{c}	^{c}	-	-	^{b,c}
34	-	-	-	-	^{c}	^{b,c}	^{b,c}	^{b,c}
35	-	^{b}	-	-	-	-	^{b,c}	^{b,c}

[a] Subgroups are identified in Appendix A.

[b] Significant difference at the .05 level or beyond in the proportion of respondents who agree and disagree.

[c] Significant difference at the .05 level or beyond among the four response choices.

EXPLANATION OF APPENDICES E AND F

The appendices which follow contain comments from the questionnaire. The comments were selected to represent both positive and negative opinions of the in-service for credit courses. It should be noted, however, that most of the respondents did not give written comments. The comments thus appear to have been made by respondents who had very positive or very negative feelings about the in-service for credit courses.

APPENDIX E

Selected Superintendents' Comments

These courses have been the only in-service activities that have had an impact on the improvement of teaching. To discontinue credit equal to college credit would be a step backward in the improvement of education.

Recommend idea of salary increments be discouraged. Three levels of salary would be more than adequate. Level 1 - three-year probation, level 2 - teacher, level 3 - Master Teacher.

The teachers in this district that are taking these in-service credits are those who need to make their certificate permanent. The overall opinion is that it is an easy way to accomplish this. In short, these are "snap" courses. An easy way out is to take these in-service programs.

In-service courses are sometimes the only additional training received by teachers who have no need nor desire for advanced education.

If something has to go - let it be the graduate courses!

Teachers prefer in-service courses because they are cheaper, local, more convenient, count towards certification, relatively no work and relatively shorter timewise than college/university courses. In-service courses have relatively little impact on instructional improvement.

I do not believe your questions will prove to be indicative of the situation.

In-service is an easy way out!

The local in-service council has been effective and responsive in planning quality programs and not time fillers. College courses have too much repetition and theory to be totally effective. A combination of college and in-service work is preferred. Present system and match is working well.

Unfortunately, when the major thrust in an in-service program is for credit, these programs follow the traditional 15 hours = 1 credit, 30 hours = 2 credits, 45 hours = 3 credits. There are a lot of good in-service topics and a lot of teacher needs which can be filled under a different timeline. Example CPR = 4 hours, seatwork activities = 8 hours, using the IEP effectively = 6 hours. Immediate concerns do not become resolved in multiples of 15 hours of time.

I really believe there is potential in the program. However, many of the offerings appear to be a re-hash of other offerings. There are only so many techniques to interest students, enhance their self-image, broaden their self-concept, etc., and so many of the offerings center on these ideas. I personally would like to see more in-service offerings which deal with material to be taught and ideas to use such material. More time should be spent, for example, in understanding now and why a concept should be taught than on how to make students develop a self-image while working with mathematics. I am not saying the latter is unimportant, but that the course offerings I have seen tend to over-emphasize this aspect.

1. Our staff is on a "performance salary schedule" and the mere taking of credits, whether in-service or college, becomes applicable only when improvement in performance is demonstrated.
2. I believe both academic college credits, programs and in-service programs should be available to staff.
3. In responding to above questions, I did not differentiate between in-service for credit and in-service without credit. I can find no basis to show that mere credit is the importance factor. Most professionals show improvement when in-service programs relate to their needs.
4. I find our staff prefers not to be involved in overall planning due to time requirements. They are busy with classroom preparation.

Many teachers will not take courses unless they are mandated to do so. Certification requirements should be revamped with fewer in-service hours, more required hours in field of certification and, last but most importantly, spread out over more years so that teachers with years of teaching experience will be required to take courses.

I believe in-service is an excellent program and should be continued. I don't believe you have to pay someone to go to school. I do believe in released time.

I am strongly in favor of in-service courses. However, this questionnaire seems to attempt to equate them as equal or even superior to college level courses. With this opinion, I strongly disagree. In-service courses, as I have observed them, are little more than practical workshops. No academic requirements are necessary; no standards are set; no library or outside reading is mandated; no research is required. To equate them with college level work is not justified. In-service courses are not designed to replace - merely to supplement.

A very good way to in-service teachers. Keep up the good work.

The requirement that a teacher acquire 24 hours of college credit or in-service credit for the issuance of the Instructional II certificate is not based on sound educational philosophy or practice. The State Board of Education is now embarked upon a pathway of compounding the problem by suggesting that 36 hours will be required to secure the Instructional II certificate. All requirements for additional credits for the Instructional II certificate should be abolished. The Instructional I certificate should be acceptable for instructional purposes for a ten-year period. Between the 10th and 15th year the teacher should be required to complete 36 hours of in-service study or college credit for the renewal of the certificate. The renewed certificate would then be acceptable for the remainder of the teacher's career. If the teacher is not competent to teach with four years of training and a Bachelors of Science Degree, an additional 36 hours of credits will not produce competence.

Our in-service for credit program is operated by our IU unit. I feel they are popular because they are offered locally and are inexpensive. I feel courses offered at our near-by colleges are superior because they attack problems more in-depth and give more techniques of teaching, newer approaches and a variety of philosophies. Our in-service courses are best when there are participants who share experiences.

I favor continuing the in-service for credit program.

When I see the titles of courses and the war stories from some of the teachers taking and teaching in-service courses offered I cringe to think about the future of education of teachers in Pennsylvania. I am totally against the way we have let an excellent concept deteriorate to such a level of inadequacy. In-service to beginning teacher means 12 goof-off credits.

I suspect the colleges are somewhat against those in-service credits, but on the other hand if they would get out of the textbook and theory into the classroom their course offerings might be more relevant.

We have found that colleges will bring a "prof" and the "tailored course" to the district. The practicing teacher wants specifics and enjoys getting what is requested.

The entire system of teacher salary advancement and credit or course collecting is in need of improvement. Courses should be taken to improve performance. Pay should be based on performance not on years alive in the classroom or on course collections. Currently coursework has little effect on teacher performance except to contribute to teacher fatigue and higher pay. If pay were based on performance this situation could be changed. However, this is highly improbable so why add to the problem by counting more courses for pay purposes?

Several of the questions lead the person responding to the survey to seem to be <u>for</u> or <u>against</u> either college courses or in-service courses. I believe most would agree that both in-service courses and college courses serve the teacher and the school district. Obviously, in-service courses are more economical for both teachers and district, but the college courses provide certain training not provided by in-service.

In-service courses have not been available to our teachers due to the extreme locations and sparcity of our area. When in-service courses have been provided say by the IU, the courses have been met with enthusiasm and interest. But this situation is rare. Part of the problem results from the district not asking for specific courses. This area of the state has a very serious problem in that meaningful courses are not offered within a 60 mile area.

I favor the present system as established between the PDE, IU and local school district. I feel it works for on-going improvements in program and instruction.

It is my opinion that in-service courses are too much "cookbook" type. Some of the courses do give a technical benefit but I am interested more in the professional development. No doubt some of the better in-service courses are superior to the poorer college courses.

The idea of local in-service programs is basicly good. The programs have a long way to go, however.

In-service must be made more demanding of the teachers.

Your questions were almost self limiting, i.e., many teachers major benefit!

Much should be left to local districts' options.

I think they should be offered by the district but not necessarily on a credit by credit basis. The goal should be after a masters' equivalency or a masters' degree. My answer has to be qualified. It would be a step backward if these program are dropped. They provide a real outlet for our teachers and administrators. I am not all that interested in paying people to do what they should be doing professionally but I think there should be some small financial incentive after they that reached certain levels of required state mandated credits.

I feel the whole program is as good as the teachers make it. It sure is a convenience for us as we are isolated.

Requirements for successful completion of in-service courses are much less than for most college credit courses. Thus more popular. Your survey fails to address the "easy" credit situation.

Overall, in-service courses are valuable. However, they balance, not replace, college courses. One thing concerns me: quality control of in-service courses. We should not permit frivolous courses, fads, etc., to creep into this program, but they have.

Most of the items circled "no opinion" are a result of lack of knowledge. A superintendent has a difficult time evaluating in-service vs. college credit because he is somewhat removed from the classroom. IU operated in-service credits are preferable to college courses because they are more apt to meet student and teacher needs. How does one evaluate whether or not a teacher's classroom performance improves as a result of in-service education unless they are questioned personally?

The in-service council in our IU does not function very well. It has not generated much teacher interest.

Teachers need to spend time on campus to benefit from the total impact of an educational institution. Education in the local area is often sterile.

Excellent method to meet unique needs of small school districts. There is a need for in-service courses selected by our teachers. These courses are practical, pragmatic and useful to our teachers who already earned MA degrees in the diploma mills of graduate school.

I find it difficult to generalize about these courses. There are good courses and average courses - good teachers and average teachers. Some attend the courses to improve their techniques and some for the financial reward. I know it is an old-fashioned idea but I would like to see teachers have the opportunity to attend in-service classes without payment or reimbursement. It may not work, but it would take away the competition between college courses and in-service work. We now see the colleges offering "watered-down" courses to attract our teachers. Since we pay 80 percent of the tuition, I am not certain that the district receives benefit for the amount of expenditure.

I find this a rather biased questionnaire. Many of your positive statements with regard to in-service for credit courses would apply equally to many graduate courses.

Our teachers see this as an excellent way to direct instruction at specific district deficiencies.

School districts should be able to prescribe courses for teachers who are ineffective.

Keep the program.

We need to do away with the 24 hours of credit in six years and require at least three credits college/in-service for every three years of teaching. No permanent certification but a continued renewal of a teaching certificate.

We have so few teachers participate in the in-service for credit courses that I have no real basis for answering most of these questions. I have, however, taught two of these courses for our IU and found that most of the registrants were not interested in credit since almost all had master's degrees.

I would like to make these points: 1. We have a commitment to local district designed/based in-service courses, in both pedagogical and financial terms. 2. I believe that our district has offered between 30 and 40 percent of the courses offered in the IU (25 districts) in the last 3-4 years. 3. Teachers have more commitment to in-service courses than your typical "stand-up lecture" graduate courses. Quality instruction/activities is essential. 4. The reverse of our problem with #3 above is that some of these courses have lees academic integrity than college courses; a few people choose the in-service "route" exclusively because they can get permanent certification in a "cake-walk." 5. I am absolutely opposed to allowing all 24 credits for permanent certification to be in-service courses. Teachers need and require exposure to the findings of research as applied to teaching, the use of a good quality professional library and its holdings, and the academic rigor set forth by caring, devoted, doctoral level college faculty. I say go back to 12 in-service maximum.

APPENDIX F

Selected Principals' Comments

In-service for credit courses have become an important part of our staff development program. If such courses were no longer available, our staff development program would be less effective.

I do not have a large group that has taken in-service courses, partly because of the distance, but those who have, have benefitted greatly. I'm very much in favor of expanded programs in their area.

There is certainly appreciable value in the PDE in-service for credit programs as it applies to provisional, permanent and renewal of certification. However, I do feel that to qualify for an advanced degree, a certain number of on-campus and/or university credits should be required.

Sounds good! I must admit we haven't used the in-service for credit program enough to evaluate it fairly.

The concept is great; however, too large a percentage of the courses are borderline academic, i.e., leather craft, photography, welding, crafts, etc. Raise the academic standard of the courses, then pay for them.

Local needs assessment frequently a myth as far as determining in-service.

Your questionnaire reflects a point of view or bias.

We need better PR on proposed programs and plenty of advanced notice. Thank you.

To my knowledge, no teachers under my supervision have taken an in-service for credit course. Therefore, I do not feel I can complete this survey.

While our district has not participated in in-service courses for a number of years I have a strong interest in the courses, and would like to see the courses instituted in our district again. I would appreciate any literature on the various programs.

Most in-service courses are offered through our IU. I do think our own district should more actively promote and schedule courses pertinent to our own needs.

More in-service for credit courses need to be offered.

I had a difficult time with this questionnaire because of its either/or orientation. Why not allow or encourage both to meet needs which each system provides best. A positive comment is that I am glad to see our PDE gathering information to help our teachers improve their teaching.

In-service for credit is appropriate and has value to the staff. Goals of college courses are not always congruent (ex. research-field studies) with in-service courses. Would not like to see teachers rely solely on this program as I feel theory, foundations, research techniques are also valuable. Prefer teachers to seek M.Ed. first.

I am unable to answer certain questions because I would only be guessing at the cause for motivation or the result. I have not measured learning increase--classroom management was never a problem--impact in class depends upon teacher, etc.--I favor maintaining in-service for credit very strongly.

We are so near many colleges that the vast majority of our teachers go to colleges for their coursework, except for occasional courses set up for our district.

In-service courses taught by staff members are much more meaningful--less theoretical and of greater practical use to new and experienced teachers.

The availability of local universities and reimbursement policies of the district encourages staff to use colleges rather than IU in-service courses.

Keep up the good work! It affords teachers the opportunity to participate in this type of in-service.

My responses probably differ from most for two reasons: 1) we are in an area in which there are two state colleges and a Penn State Campus within easy driving distance, all with very good elementary programs, 2) our teachers receive 80% reimbursement for graduate credits.

Our teachers closely watch the schedule of classes.

Strong in-service programs are necessary for any public school system. I sincerely hope we will implement them in the very near future.

Economics is a major factor in teachers participation in the in-service or college programs.

Most of the in-service courses sponsored by the IU are a waste of time in my opinion.

We do not need an either/or situation when it comes to in-service courses as compared to college oriented courses. Each has its strong points and values; each has its place.

The original interest of in-service courses is very good and worthwhile. However, courses that are designed for a specific group of teachers (coaches, p.e., i.a., etc.) are being taken by others who can not possibly use the knowledge to improve their classroom competencies. Some are taken only for movement on the salary schedule.

Keep them coming!

Since none of our staff have taken any of these courses this year I do not feel qualified to respond. I applaud the concept and feel in-service courses are beneficial to those who are seeking information in a specific area but are not concerned about college credits; or to those staff members who cannot get to a college or university for courses.

Instructors up to this point have been of high quality. Teachers enjoyed courses. Of course, carry over cannot always be observed. One benefit of these courses is that teachers can help in planning.

Good questionnaire!

Not enough in-service courses offered.

Too many people take credits for salary increases. At least 50% of our staff take meaningless courses which are easy and offer little challenge or academic stimulation.

In-service courses if monitored effectively can be a major boon to school district personnel.

I would rather see the in-service credit courses run through a college or university. Since the state supports most colleges and universities, it seems like we are competing with ourselves, sometimes.

Your in-service programs to schools remains a mystery (no publicity to teachers, principals about programs).

I have seen little evidence that the taking of additional courses has an impact on the quality of the individual's performance or the overall "production" of a building unit. The prime motivation is salary increments.

We are in a college town and most of our teachers get graduate credit at the institution. I am not aware of any in-service credit classes used by our staff.

In-service courses are a valuable tool for staff development. To insure participation, a stipend could be offered. To maintain a high level of professionalism, however, salary schedules and most especially, certification, should be attained through an accredited college or university.

Our experience with the program has been very positive. I support such courses, although they have a tendency to lower graduate course participation at local colleges.

This form is entirely too long. You seem to ask about five ideas six different ways.

College courses are designed for knowledge or subject matter, plus advanced degree status. In-service courses are designed for techniques, strategies and special skill development.

Basically a good idea. Our people haven't taken as much advantage of them as they could.

In-service courses with a build-in follow-up system for implementation, and then continuation of ideas and techniques, are needed. The "one-shot" deals rarely have lasting effects.

We have not conducted an in-service for credit course in at least the last 8 years. I therefore cannot answer some of the questions or statements.

Continue the in-service program for certification purposes. Higher education must realize that the purpose is not to require more expensive graduate courses to provide or preserve college teaching positions.

We are just beginning this program; therefore, my answers are based on my experience elsewhere.

In general in-service credit courses have been offered on a very limited basis in our district. The courses offered via our IU may or may not meet our needs. More local (district) support is needed for these types of programs.

No experience with in-service credits. Staff has not taken courses. Majority of staff members have a masters degree.

In-service courses are necessary. They're conducted by local people for local people. Many of our university people are out of touch with public schools and their needs.

In-service courses in Philadelphia are taught by people who know their trade from experience. They know the problems and the concerns of the teachers because they have already been down the same road. They are able to offer pertinent suggestions for just about any concerns that the teachers may have. University professors, more often than not, are removed from the real world of children, problems and frustrations that the teachers experience. Some university professors are not even good teachers of teachers, let alone able to help teachers to teach children.

The in-service program offers districts a means to maintain the individuality of their school districts and their right to educate their own. College courses have brought this on, in part, themselves because of irrelevant curricula and over priced courses, taught only on campus.

With the decline in student population and the cutting of teachers on a seniority basis we have few who do not have permanent certification. Those who don't, plus many of our junior teachers who do, are being asked to take credits to obtain duel certification in order to maintain a job. With this pressure, bitterness from negotiation and a contract that only pays for college credits, in-service is a low priority.

Biggest problem is that of transportation to colleges, e.g., 1 1/2 to 2 hours each way is unreasonable.

I helped develop first in-service councils in our IU. They have been very well organized and carried out.

There is a local need to rotate availability of in-service courses for credit for teachers with specialty certification--home economics, industrial arts, music, fine arts, etc.

The only problem seems to be that these courses are not available to our teachers. The IU has run one course on "media" but other than that nothing has been available.

Our teachers do not take these courses because the district does not recognize them to go forward on the salary scale. Thus, the opinionnaire is not valid since our teachers are not involved. Thus I marked "no opinion."

There's no direct correlation between the taking of these courses and the improvement in teaching performance and as a result, a benefit to the organization. Not enough "rigor" in these courses. Invalid assumption that the more courses a teacher takes will result in a better teacher.

It is a good concept and should be expanded.

Not enough teachers taking advantage of an excellent opportunity to improve their classroom skills. Program in the main is excellent.

We are not too familiar with the entire program. Perhaps if we had more information at the school level it would help.

The questionnaire was a little short to really cover the territory. About five pages of questions would have been more "substantiative."

Teachers take these type of courses because 1) they are easy, 2) they don't have to travel at night into the city, 3) they are less expensive, 4) needed for 24 credits past B.Ed., 5) little or no term papers, work, 6) inferior teachers (i.e., #1 and #5) and 7) count on salary scale.

Since courses are offered through the IU, they meet general rather than specific local needs.

I have worked in Pennsylvania for the past three years and until this questionnaire I was unaware of such a program under the auspices of the PDE. More publicity is necessary.

It is my considered opinion that the masters equivalency should be done away with, for I have known many people who have taken "ping-pong" courses and have gotten credit on a masters scale. I also feel that since the recodification will call for 30 credits to make the certification permanent, I would feel that nothing but an accepted masters program should be allowed.

In most cases I circled no opinion because I do not have enough experience with the program to offer a valid opinion. As a matter of fact I believe that so few of my teachers have participated because of the lack of information.

Most of our teachers find in-service courses convenient, time saving and informative if the courses are taught by competent persons and meet the needs of the teachers from that district. Some courses offered by the IU are good because they give teachers from different districts a chance to exchange ideas.

The only in-service credit courses that are offered in our district are those offered by the IU which are held at centers that are far enough to be considered irrelevant and impractical during the energy crunch. The in-service credit course should be taught by our own administrative staff to become effective.

In-service courses by and large are an asset to any school and/or its personnel.